Testing of Akash Missile

3396. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India again test fired sucessfully the Akash Missile from the Chandipur Range on Orissa Coast on October 3, 2005;

(b) what aspects, targeting capability and range etc., were tested; and

(c) how far the same was found successful and accurate; and

(d) the progress so far made in the missile development programme?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Akash Missile System was flight tested on 3rd October, 2005 to demonstrate, target intercept during simultaneous launch against two targets. All the main mission objectives were achieved.

(d) Prithvi and Agni missile systems have been inducted and Nag and Akash Missile systems are ready for users' trials.

Commissioning of pollution controlling vehicles by Indian Navy

†3397. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Navy is preparing to commission pollution controlling vessels in the sea, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the number of oil tankers and ships sunk in Indian territorial waters during last three years and the quantity of oil spread in the seas and to which extent it has become dangerous to the country;

(c) whether Government of India had imposed a ban on the use of 25 year old tankers but it is still being violated; and

(d) the steps Government are taking to save their sea area?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir. However, the Coast Guard has placed order for the indigenous

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

construction of three Pollution Control Vessels on M/s. ABG Shipyard, Surat. The vessels are at different stages of construction. The first of the three vessels is likely to be delivered by March 2007.

(b) A total of 14 ships sank in Indian waters from May, 2003 to April, 2006. During this period, there were six incidents resulting into spillage of 733 tonnes of oil in Indian waters. These incidents were effectively monitored and contained by the Coast Guard.

(c) and (d) Director General (DG), Shipping, has issued appropriate guidelines/circulars regarding oil tankers so as to prevent our seas from pollution. DG, Shipping, has also issued circular for enforcing International Maritime Organization (IMO) regulations. Single hull oil tankers being crude oil tanker of 20,000 deadweight tones and above, and oil product carriers of 30,000 deadweight tones and above, having no segregated ballast tanks in protective locations (SBT/PL) and which are the most vulnerable oil tankers, have all been phased out by 2005. Similarly, single hull tankers of the above size but equipped with SBT/PL and single hull oil tankers being crude oil tankers below 20,000 deadweight tones and oil product carriers below 30,000 deadweight tones but above 5000 deadweight tones, delivered before January, 1978 were also phased out by 2005. No violation of the guidelines issued regarding the above types of tankers has been reported.

Government of India have also formed a committee to review the long term policy on oil spill management that involves action at inter-ministerial level. Indian Coast Guard has been nominated as the nodal agency for combating oil pollution and Central Coordinating Authority for National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan.

Denial of cell phone facility in border areas

3398. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the people in the international border areas are being deprived of the provision of cell phones on defence grounds;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these people are suffering a lot for want of cell phone even in the matter of law and order; and